

The Native American excesses in young maternal age, low educational levels, and death of a previous liveborn are persistent; these same problems were identified earlier.³

In Table 6, the categories labeled A-H are high-risk maternal characteristics identifiable before the present birth. As depicted in Figure 7, Native American mothers are found to be much more likely than Whites and slightly less likely than Blacks to have one or more of these characteristics. The corresponding numbers and percentages for selected counties are found in Table 7.

Prenatal Care

Among live births during 1987-91, both reservation and nonreservation Indian mothers were more likely than White mothers but less likely than Black mothers to have had no care or late care, as shown in Table 8. The percentages for late or no care were higher for nonreservation than for reservation Indians.

A prenatal care index developed by Kessner⁵ takes into account month of first visit, number of visits, and gestational age at delivery. According to the criteria (see Glossary, page 19), "inadequate"

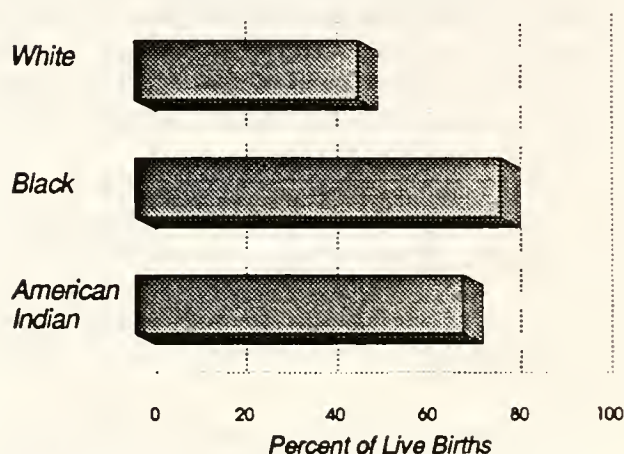
means essentially care beginning in the third trimester or fewer than five prenatal care visits. It should not be assumed, however, that all other births involve "adequate" care.

For the state and selected counties, Table 9 provides the 1987-91 numbers and percentages of mothers having inadequate prenatal care by race. The statewide relationships observed here (Figure 8) are the same as those observed for late or no prenatal care; Indians were much more likely than Whites but less likely than Blacks to have had inadequate care. As above, the percentage inadequate was higher for nonreservation than for reservation Indian mothers. This reverses the pattern observed during 1979-83 when the percentage inadequate was higher for reservation Indians (12.4) than for their counterparts elsewhere (9.0).³

Maternal Medical Conditions

The North Carolina birth certificate was revised in 1988 to include checkboxes for medical risk factors associated with the pregnancy and delivery. Anemia, diabetes, and hypertension during pregnancy are the most commonly recorded medical conditions of the mother.

Figure 7
Percentage of Mothers Having One or More Risk Factors* by Race
North Carolina 1987-91



*One or more of eight sociodemographic characteristics; See A-H of Table 6.

Figure 8
Percent of Mothers Having Inadequate Prenatal Care by Race
North Carolina 1987-91

